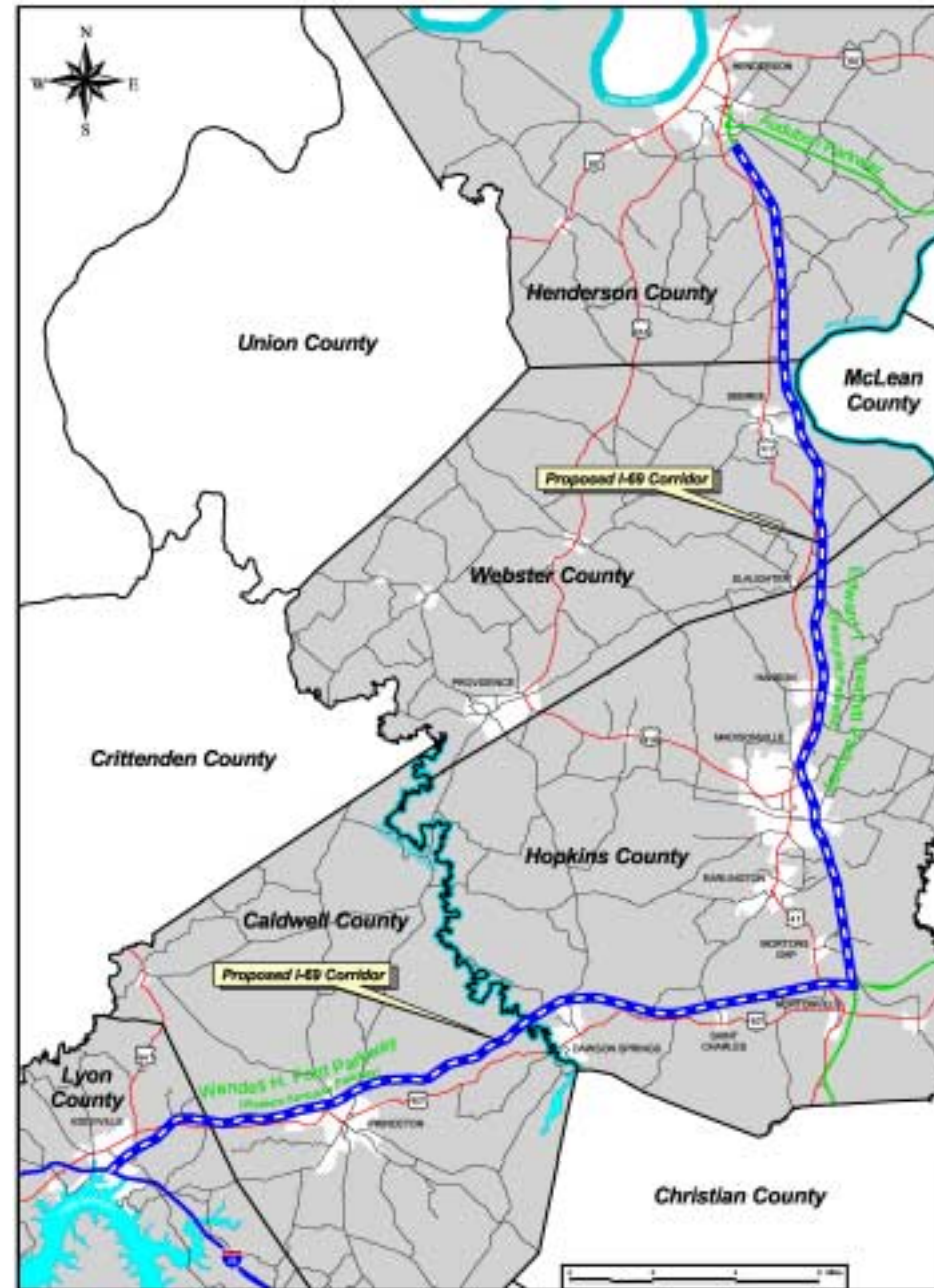


Project Study Area Strategic Corridor Planning Study for I-69



Contact Information:

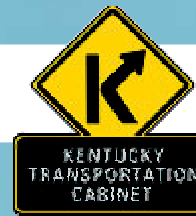
Address written comments to:

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Or you may contact by phone:

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Project Manager
Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
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jimmy.wilson@mail.state.ky.us

You may also look for project information at:
<http://www.kytc.state.ky.us/planning/index.shtm>.

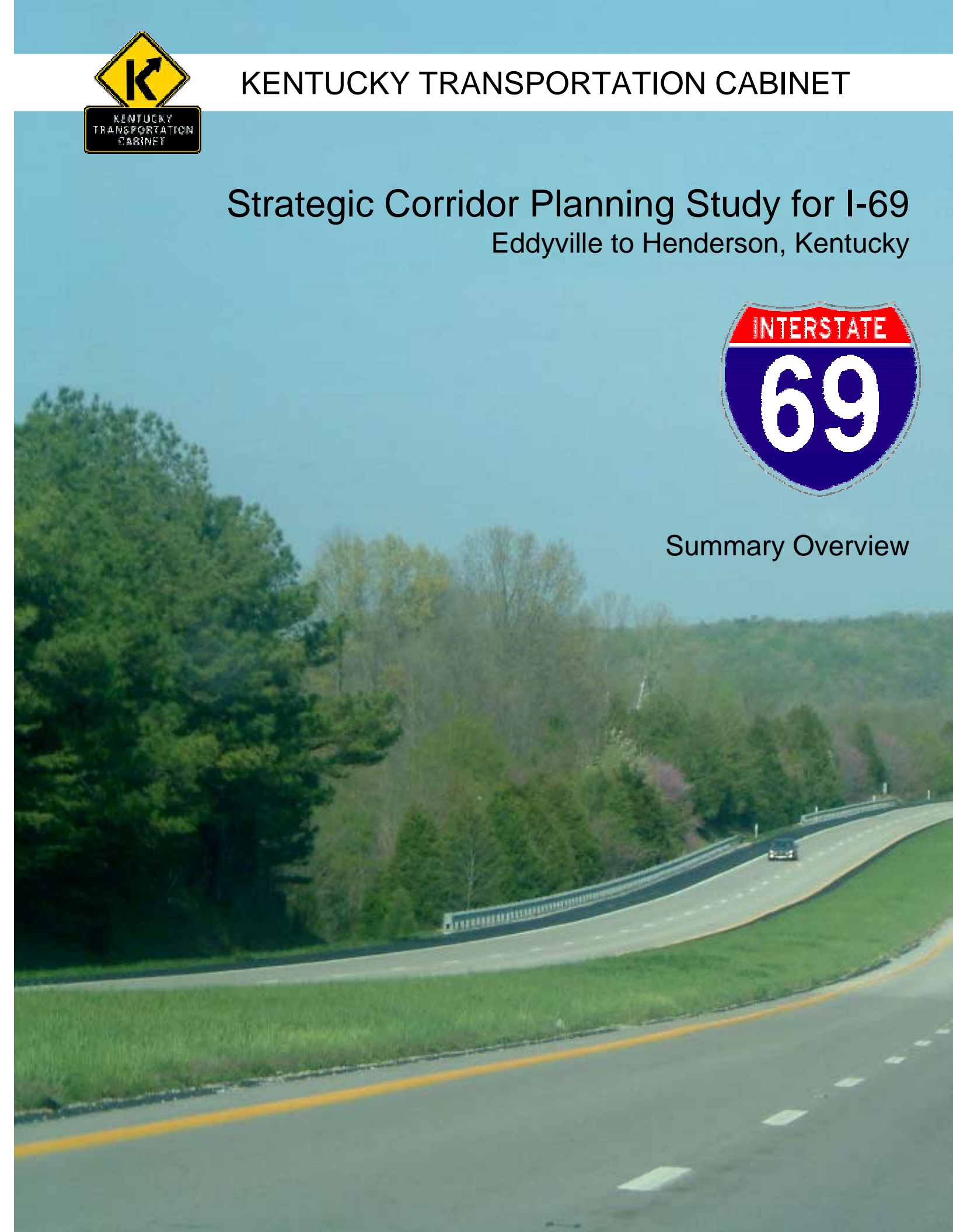


KENTUCKY TRANSPORTATION CABINET

Strategic Corridor Planning Study for I-69 Eddyville to Henderson, Kentucky



Summary Overview



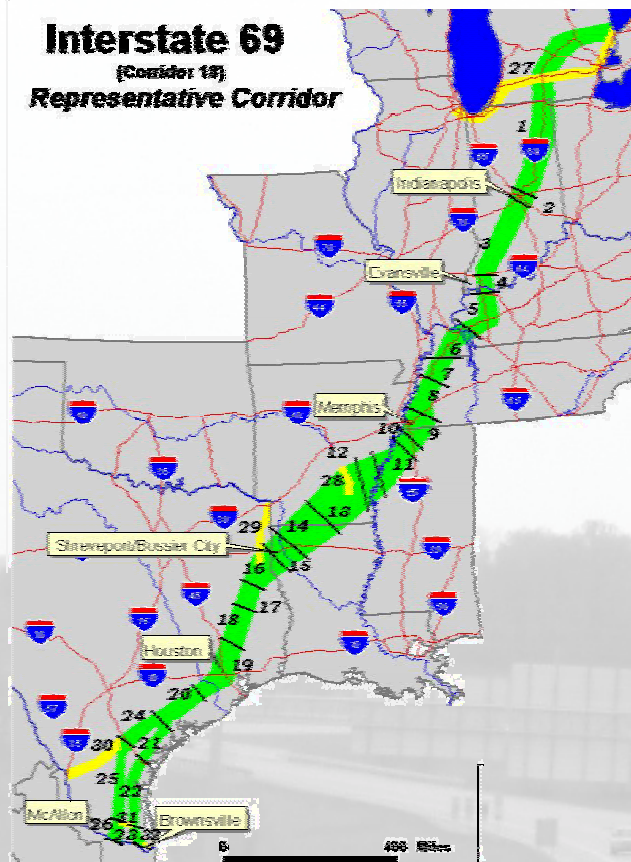
I-69 Project Background

A national study was completed in 1993 which determined that construction of I-69 from Canada to Mexico was a worthwhile project to pursue. The I-69 Corridor (Corridor 18) consists of an extension of existing I-69 from Port Huron, Michigan to the Texas/Mexico border. With a total length of over 1600 miles, the added sections of I-69 will require many years to construct. This length makes it impossible to approach the project as a single construction effort. The types of work to be done vary from location to location and include widening, reconstruction, relocation and development of entirely new facilities. A practical approach is to complete a series of projects that are all consistent with the overall purpose and need for I-69.

I-69 National Approach

The extension of I-69 from Michigan to the Texas/Mexico Border will require a series of individual linking projects. The segment between Eddyville and Henderson is one of 32 such projects. This planning study will help to identify where and how this link should be created.

In order to approach this in a realistic manner, the I-69 corridor is broken into workable segments, each of which can be constructed in a reasonable time frame by the state or states involved. If improved, each of these Sections of Independent Utility (SIU) must be able to stand on its own, whether adjacent sections are completed or not. A given section may be in place for several years before an adjacent section is completed and open to traffic; hence the concept of having independent utility. The process of defining these sections involves identifying a highway project that meets a number of principles and criteria.



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Comparing Alternates

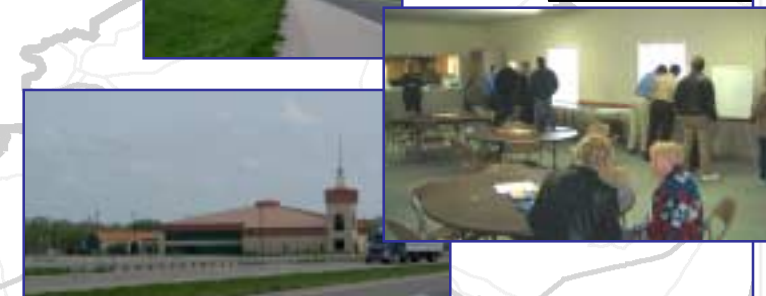
The comparing of alternatives will be based on all gathered information, as well as input received throughout the planning process. Using GIS and an array of data sources, information on the current network can be gathered and used to identify potential alternates for the Eddyville to Henderson I-69 segment. After selecting a set of potential alternatives, they can be evaluated in terms of cost, potential impacts, potential benefits and public desires.



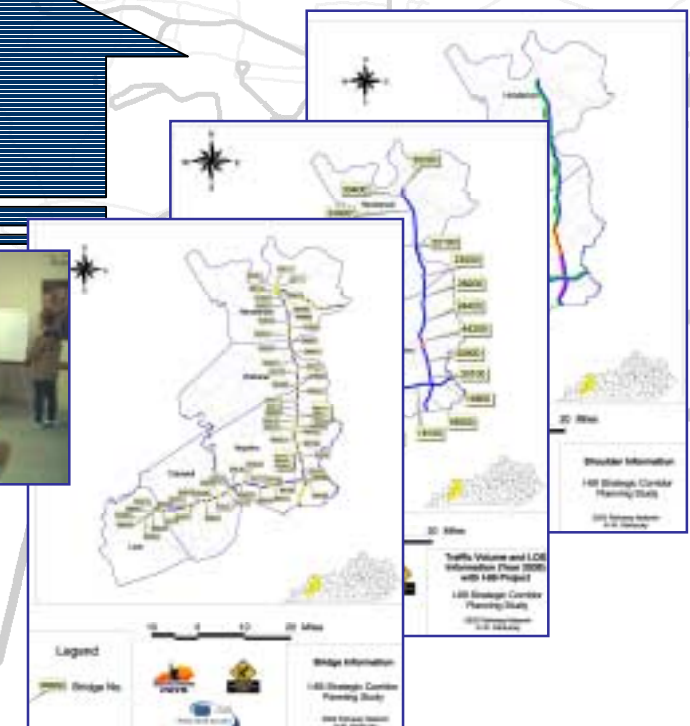
Evaluation

The alternative improvements will be evaluated relative to environmental issues, travel/economic benefits, public and resource agency comments, costs and engineering feasibility. Current design standards along the parkways do not meet typical interstate design standards. In particular, major bridges and interchanges will need to be considered and cost estimates developed for expanding or replacing these features. These structures are of special concern due to the funding required to bring the structures up to interstate design standards. More specifically, the widening and increasing of vertical clearance create major concerns.

Identification of Alternative Improvements



Field visits and GIS data will be used to identify transportation network issues and opportunities. With these, public input, the environmental context, surrounding land uses, and the proximities of other modes of transport will all play an important role in identifying viable alternatives for I-69 between Eddyville and Henderson, Kentucky.



Current Corridor Data

Logical Termini

The termini, or beginning and ending, of this section were selected to permit consideration of alternative alignments south of Henderson while connecting with I-24 near the end of the Wendell H. Ford (Western Kentucky) Parkway. Options will be considered for improvement of the Edward T. Breathitt (Pennyrite) Parkway and the Wendell H. Ford (Western Kentucky) Parkway to I-24 near the Tennessee River and the Land Between-the-Lakes.



Independent Utility

This section has independent utility because it permits analysis of a southwest-to-northeast interstate routing across western Kentucky connecting I-24 and the Henderson Bypass (KY 425). It would provide a usable section of interstate-type roadway even if other sections of I-69 were not completed.

Other Planned Improvements

This study will also consider how improvements along the parkways become part of the I-69 Corridor and other highway projects in the region.

Preliminary Goals and Objectives

The initial set of national goals for I-69 include:

1. The movement of goods;
2. Provide more job opportunities to local communities; and
3. System linkage.

Consideration will be given to integrating these national goals with the local needs and concerns identified for the Eddyville to Henderson segment. At the first project team meeting, preliminary project goals considered included:

- Maximize the use of existing parkways;
- Serve local industry; and
- Provide an improved facility for increasing truck traffic.

Public and Agency Input

A series of meetings and coordination activities will occur through the course of this study to inform and obtain input from local officials, public agency representatives, other stakeholders and the general public. It is anticipated that two full rounds of meetings will occur through the course of the project. The first round of meetings will take place at the beginning of the project and seek to obtain input on options and issues.

The second round of meetings will likely occur after the corridor has been studied and evaluated, but prior to the finalization of corridor recommendations. A final wrap-up meeting may be held at the conclusion of the study to present the final recommendations and next steps in the project development process. Input opportunities include:

- KYTC Project Team Meetings;
- Local Officials/Local Interest Meetings;
- Public Meetings; and
- Outreach to the general public as well as low-income and minority populations.

Project status reports will be given at these meetings, as well as posted on the KYTC project website.

Through the public involvement process, a set of project goals will be identified that can serve as an evaluation measure throughout the development of the project.



Environmental Research and Analysis

The environmental overview seeks to identify known environmental issues based upon publicly available data sources that can be obtained and developed for analysis purposes. Study team members will conduct a cursory field review (windshield survey) along the existing corridor and connecting side roads as needed. In addition, information relating to potential environmental issues will be obtained from the public via public questionnaires as well as federal, state and local databases. Results of the environmental overview are then mapped using Geographic Information System (GIS) software.

The Environmental Overview of the corridor will be documented in a separate technical report. Where appropriate, generalized recommendations will be offered on future measures that can be taken to avoid, minimize, mitigate and/or enhance the potential effects of corridor development on known environmental issues. Environmental concerns should be reduced since the majority of corridor improvements will be made within the existing right-of-way or immediately adjacent to the existing parkways.

Environmental Factors to be Identified and Analyzed

- Social, Economic and Environmental Justice
- Historic and Archaeological Sites
- Natural Features and Waterways
- Prime and Unique Farmland
- Floral and Faunal Communities
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Hazardous Materials, UST's, Oil and Gas Wells
- Geotechnical, Karst and Mining
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Others, as appropriate



Eddyville To Henderson Planning Study

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) is undertaking this planning study for the I-69 corridor from Eddyville, Kentucky to Henderson, Kentucky to determine more definite and detailed alternatives for this segment of the new I-69 corridor. This study will identify and evaluate potential alternatives for improving the Wendell H. Ford (Western Kentucky) and Edward T. Breathitt (Pennyrlie) Parkways from I-24 near Eddyville to KY 425 at Henderson. It will identify and evaluate environmental factors, and social and economic constraints, as well as document and consider public and official comments, suggestions, and insight.

The planning study area passes through portions of Lyon, Caldwell, Hopkins, Webster and Henderson Counties in Kentucky. This study will coordinate with the on-going study of a proposed I-69 corridor in the Evansville-Henderson area. The Evansville-Henderson I-69 study will identify the proposed location for the Ohio River Crossing and will likely have a southern terminus at the Edward T. Breathitt (Pennyrlie) Parkway south of Henderson, Kentucky. The Eddyville to Henderson study will consider and address the connections to other major roadways in the project area.

The anticipated analysis will involve consideration of all viable alternatives for the improving the existing parkways.

Local Segment

This particular section is denoted as SIU No. 5 in the I-69 (Corridor 18) Special Environmental Report. SIU No. 5 spans between Eddyville, Kentucky and Henderson, Kentucky. When complete, this project will provide a connecting link in the multi-state I-69 corridor on the National level.

Components of the Planning Study

Transportation Network – Information on highways and traffic conditions within the corridor will be collected and analyzed. This includes obtaining highway system data available from the KYTC, collecting aerial photography from available sources, and assembling United States Geological Survey (USGS) topographic Global Information System (GIS) files and digital orthophotography for the study area.

Public and Agency Input – Throughout the study, there will be meetings with both the public and other stakeholders and resource agencies. These meetings will be used to gather necessary information and input and to keep interested parties up to date on the study's findings and progress. To assist in keeping the public and agencies informed, information will be added to the KYTC's Division of Planning website: <http://www.kytc.state.ky.us/planning/index.shtm>. This website will be updated on a regular basis as new information becomes available.

Environmental Overview – Using an array of data sources including field surveys and agency input, a preliminary environmental overview of the project corridor shall be completed. This overview will identify major social and natural factors that could affect the location of the potential routes.

Development and Analysis of Alternatives – Using the gathered input from all sources, a series of I-69 alternative improvements for upgrading the parkways will be identified. These will be evaluated on their merits in each of the study components (transportation network, public and agency input, environmental issues, etc.), as well as on total cost and constructability.